



COUNCIL MINUTES

October 2, 2008

The City Council of the City of Mesa met in a Study Session in the lower level meeting room of the Council Chambers, 57 East 1st Street, on October 2, 2008 at 7:30 a.m.

COUNCIL PRESENT

Mayor Scott Smith
Alex Finter
Dina Higgins
Kyle Jones
Dennis Kavanaugh
Scott Somers

COUNCIL ABSENT

Dave Richins

OFFICERS PRESENT

Christopher Brady
Debbie Spinner
Linda Crocker

Mayor Smith excused Councilmember Richins from the entire meeting.

1. Review items on the agenda for the October 6, 2008 Regular Council meeting.

All of the items on the agenda were reviewed among Council and staff and the following was noted:

Conflicts of interest declared: None

Items added to the consent agenda: None

2. Hear a presentation, discuss and provide direction on the proposed Planned Community District and the Pre-Annexation Development Agreement (Entitlements Agreement) for the Mesa Proving Grounds.

Planning Director John Wesley addressed the Council and provided an overview of the changes and revisions made to the Community Plan (a copy is available for review in the City Clerk's Office), many of which address issues raised by the Council during previous meetings. He stated the opinion that staff and the applicant were very close to reaching a final agreement on the document. Mr. Wesley referenced the revised pages, and he noted that the majority of the changes reinforce the effort to create an urban environment in the Mesa Proving Grounds (MPG) area. He highlighted changes in the following areas:

- Section 7, which addresses the Land Use Groups.
- Sections 4 and 5, which address the Master Plan.

Mr. Wesley advised that an additional adjustment to the Master Plan would be presented for consideration at the next Council meeting. He referred to Section 3 and noted that the phrase “living well over time” refers to the sustainability aspect of the development; i.e., a development that can evolve and change over time while meeting the environmental needs of the community. Mr. Wesley highlighted the following sections of the Community Plan related to transit issues:

- Section 2 commits to cooperation on transit issues with the Mesa Gateway Strategic Development Plan.
- Section 10 states that easements and rights-of-way will be provided for transit-related items, such as bus shelters, on-street transit centers and pullouts.

In response to a question from Mayor Smith, Mr. Wesley said that although transit funding would not be addressed in the Community Plan, funding options could be included in the Development Agreement.

Mr. Wesley stated that the issue of facilitating job creation is included in Section 3 of the Community Plan, which references the Major General Plan Amendment and the intention to create a center of regional importance.

Responding to comments from Mayor Smith regarding the manner in which this Plan deviates from the City’s typical procedures, Mr. Wesley explained that an Economic Development Statement, which delineates the manner in which the Plan’s goals are to be achieved, would be required for each case in a Development Unit.

At the request of City Manager Christopher Brady, Mr. Wesley referred to item B on page 49.1 of Section 5.1, which states that the Economic Development Statement would describe the manner in which the economic development goals would be achieved and how the development would contribute to the creation of a place of regional importance.

Discussion ensued relative to the fact that Section 6 includes mechanisms for comparisons of job growth; that the developer would be required to provide information on the types of jobs to be created and the anticipated salary levels for the jobs; that the site plans would provide information on the manner in which the site would be built; and that the burden would be on the developer to demonstrate within their Economic Development Statement the manner in which the goals would be achieved.

Mr. Brady advised that different methods of tracking performance have been discussed. He stated that a large amount of flexibility has been incorporated into this zoning, and he added that discussions have been ongoing with the developer regarding various methods of measuring accountability.

Mayor Smith noted that with the flexibility provided in the agreement, the developer should also be required to meet basic minimum standards.

Development Services Director Christine Zielonka advised that the Economic Development Department has been requested to collaborate with the Planning Department to review the plans as they are received and to provide a written assessment of the job potential. She suggested that staff could provide the Council with an annual progress report.

Mayor Smith expressed concern that creativity could be minimized if the City became overly concerned with "keeping score" on the progress of the development, but he recognized that the City has a fiduciary responsibility.

Councilmember Kavanaugh concurred that the Council has a fiduciary responsibility to the citizens of Mesa to evaluate and measure the progress over time.

Councilmember Somers noted that benchmarking would be of value to staff and the developer.

Further discussion ensued relative to the fact that the economic information is ingrained in the process; and that the Planning Director would determine when a plan meets or does not meet the standard of the Community Plan adopted by the Council.

Mr. Wesley advised that the final version of the Community Plan will be introduced at the Council meeting on Monday, October 6th.

Additional discussion ensued relative to the fact that the Development Unit Plan would identify the projected land use groups that will determine the character of the development; that the Economic Development Statement would indicate the mix of uses and will be compared to the minimum numbers specified in the Land Use Budget; that the numbers submitted in the Major General Plan Amendment would be considered by Economic Development in their analysis; and that higher densities are anticipated to evolve over time.

Mayor Smith acknowledged the efforts put forth by both staff and DMB to develop a Plan that inspires excellence and at the same time protects the interests of the community. He noted that this is a revolutionary approach to land use for a large-scale development, and he thanked staff for the presentation.

3. Acknowledge receipt of minutes of various boards and committees.

- a. Downtown Development Committee meetings held on April 17 and August 21, 2008
- b. Library Advisory Board meeting held on May 20, 2008
- c. Transportation Advisory Board meeting held on August 19, 2008

It was moved by Councilmember Somers, seconded by Vice Mayor Jones, that receipt of the above-referenced minutes be acknowledged.

Mayor Smith declared the motion carried unanimously by those present.

4. Hear reports on meetings and/or conferences attended.

There were no reports on meetings and/or conferences attended.

5. Scheduling of meetings and general information.

City Manager Christopher Brady noted that each member of the Council was provided a copy of the "2008/09 Strategic Planning Guide" (a copy is available for review in the City Clerk's Office), which summarizes the discussions between Council and staff at the August 28 and 30, 2008 Strategic Planning Workshops.

Mr. Brady stated that the meeting schedule is as follows:

Thursday, October 2, 2008, 9:00 a.m. – Audit & Finance Committee meeting

Thursday, October 2, 2008, 1:30 p.m. – Public Safety Committee meeting

Saturday, October 4, 2008, 8:00 a.m. – Household Hazardous Waste Event

Saturday, October 4, 2008, 11:00 a.m. – Kickoff Ceremony for MAC Fest

Sunday, October 5, 2008 – "Three for Free Event" at Mesa's Museums

Saturday, October 11, 2008, 8:00 a.m. – District 6 Breakfast at Fire Station #212

6. Items from citizens present.

There were no items from citizens present.

7. Convene an Executive Session.

It was moved by Councilmember Somers, seconded by Vice Mayor Jones, that the Council adjourn the Study Session at 8:24 a.m. and enter into an Executive Session.

Mayor Smith declared the motion carried unanimously by those present and an Executive Session was convened at 8:25 a.m.

- a. Discussion or consultation for legal advice with the City Attorney. (A.R.S. §38-431.03A (3)) Discussion or consultation with the City Attorney in order to consider the City's position and instruct the City Attorney regarding the City's position regarding all contracts involving the development of the Mesa Proving Grounds that are the subject of negotiations, in pending or contemplated litigation or in settlement discussions conducted in order to avoid or resolve litigation. (A.R.S. §38-431.03A(4))
 1. Mesa Proving Grounds, approximately 3,200 acres of the former General Motors Proving Grounds facility, located generally at the southeast corner of Elliot and Ellsworth Roads.

8. Adjournment.

Without objection, the Executive Session adjourned at 10:30 a.m.

SCOTT SMITH, MAYOR

ATTEST:

LINDA CROCKER, CITY CLERK

I hereby certify that the foregoing minutes are a true and correct copy of the minutes of the Study Session of the City Council of Mesa, Arizona, held on the 2nd day of October 2008. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held and that a quorum was present.

LINDA CROCKER, CITY CLERK

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